

**Twelve-Month Review of Implementation of
Recommendations in the U.S. Department of Labor's
Public Report of Review of Submission 2011-03 (Dominican Republic)
October 16, 2014**

On September 27, 2013, the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) issued a public report in response to a submission filed under Chapter 16 (the Labor Chapter) of the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR). USDOL's Public Report of Review of Submission 2011-03 identified labor concerns in the sugar sector in the Dominican Republic and offered recommendations to the Government of the Dominican Republic (GODR) to address the report's findings and improve enforcement of Dominican labor laws in that sector. In the report, USDOL committed to engage with the GODR to address the identified concerns and implement the report's recommendations, and to review the status of such implementation six months and again 12 months after publication.

Since publication of the report in September 2013, USDOL has engaged at senior and technical levels with the GODR to address the concerns identified in the report and implement the report's recommendations. In addition to e-mail and phone communications and three video conferences held between September 2013 and March 2014, this engagement included discussion with the sugar industry and civil society, as well as two USDOL delegation trips to the Dominican Republic, in March and August 2014. Additionally, a high-level meeting between the GODR and the U.S. Embassy in Santo Domingo is planned to take place in October 2014.

Additionally, USDOL funded a \$10 million technical assistance project to reduce child labor and improve labor rights and working conditions in the Dominican agriculture sector, including the sugar sector. While the implementation of this project was not essential to address the concerns identified in USDOL's report, the project could have facilitated any such efforts. Due to lack of support from the GODR, USDOL discontinued project activities in the Dominican Republic in September.

In March 2014, the GODR expressed a willingness to take measures that, if instituted, could have begun to address some of the concerns identified in the report. Fulfillment of certain goals in the Dominican Ministry of Labor's strategic and operating plans could also represent positive steps towards addressing those concerns. To date, the GODR has not provided any specific or verifiable information that it has taken the measures discussed in March or any other measures that would address the concerns raised in the report.

The U.S. government remains committed to engaging with the GODR and continuing to explore with the GODR ways to address the concerns identified in the report related to the effective enforcement of Dominican labor laws in the sugar sector. Over the next six months, the U.S. government will continue to monitor and assess progress towards addressing the labor concerns identified in the report and, at the same time, will consider additional ways to support any such efforts and whether further action is needed.